

the courthouse and around the city square. Ed really was "Mr. Thomaston." He was serving on my district's Small Business Committee as well as serving on the Thomaston-Upson Arts Council, the Upson County School Board, the Lions Club, and as a deacon at First Baptist Church of Thomaston. In recognition of all of Ed's work, he was rewarded the well-deserved Lifetime Achievement Award in 2009 from the Thomaston Chamber of Commerce. There is a laundry list of groups impacted by Ed's energy, and his involvement could never be replaced or forgotten by anyone.

The dedication Ed showed to his community pales in comparison to his dedication to family. My thoughts and prayers continue to be with Patricia, Ed's wife of 55 years; his three children, Dick, Debbie, and Nancy; and his six grandchildren, one of whom, William, is currently serving as an intern in my Newnan office. I cannot adequately express, Mr. Speaker, how grateful I am to Ed and his family for all that he has done for Georgia and for me.

So, Ed, until we meet again, we all miss you.

RATING THE CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, Members often come to the floor to talk about inspector general reports about agencies. And they are almost always critical of reports—reports that document shortcomings.

I'm very proud today to come to the floor to present excerpts from a joint report from the inspectors general of the Federal Reserve and the Treasury, in which they give a perfect set of marks to the new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Those two agencies looked into this agency. This is an agency that is being set up, under fire, unfortunately, in a somewhat unusual situation. And what the inspectors general reported is that they've done everything right; that "they identified and documented mission-critical activities and legislative mandates"; that the CFPB has developed and is implementing appropriate plans.

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They found that they are implementing appropriate plans that support ongoing operations as well as the transfer of employees and functions. They created several agency-wide documents that identified and tracked priorities. "We found that the agency has completed elements of its implementation plans and is making progress on others."

It is a joint report from two inspectors general that says they've done everything right; so I want to put that forward.

I want to put it forward, in part, because the individual most singularly

responsible for its great success, as she was for the idea and the creation of this agency, is Elizabeth Warren. Elizabeth Warren is one of the most able and dedicated individuals that I've ever encountered, who has dedicated herself to public service.

I regret very much that uninformed political opposition denied her the appointment to be the head of the agency, because she was not only the creator of this idea and a great partner for those of us on the Financial Services Committee—I see my colleague from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE) who was an important part of this on the floor as we set this up in the face of significant opposition from vested interests and from ideologues—but in having had the idea, she then presided as the appointee of the Secretary of the Treasury and of the President to set this agency up in an extraordinary way. It is now, on the date when it takes off, ready to function. So she was not simply the creator of the idea and a great advocate, but she has shown herself to be a great administrator; and I regret the fact that she is not getting the appointment.

Although I have great confidence in the appointment of Mr. Cordray, whom the President appointed—he was an outstanding Attorney General, and he will be an outstanding Director—I want to reflect for just a minute on why we had such unwarranted opposition to a woman of great sense and of moderation, a woman who understands the market and was ready to help it function.

Part of it, I have to say, was gender bias. Along with Sheila Bair, recently departed as head of the FDIC, Ms. Warren encountered from some people—maybe unconsciously on their part—the notion that a very strong-willed woman with strong opinions might have a place but not in the financial sector; and I regret the loss of both of them. Yet there was also on the part of my most conservative Republican colleagues a recognition that she was a threat. I disagree with the position not to appoint her, but I give credit to President Obama and Secretary Geithner because they helped us get this agency created, and they did put her in the position and gave her their full backing to get it this far.

We would have ideologues here who would have people believe that government is always a bad thing, that less government is always better. We've seen it in this notion that we should cap government at X percent or Y percent—but I don't regard more fire-fighting as a bad thing; I don't think research into Alzheimer's and cancer is something we need to limit; I am not opposed to fixing bridges and highways. So this notion that government is always bad is mindless. There is a particular problem—and the private sector is a place that will create wealth, and I want us to do what we can to create the right conditions for the private sector, but there will be times when we need the government to protect people

from the private sector. That was the rationale of the Consumer Bureau.

The Consumer Bureau was set up—and it's a very popular entity—to protect individual citizens from abuses in the private sector. It's working well. It was well-designed, I must say. It was well set up, as the inspectors general have said. So I believe my most right-wing colleagues are terrified. It is their false notion that the government is always the source of the problem and the private sector is always the source of the good. Sometimes the government does create problems, and much of the time the private sector does create wealth, but there are times when the public sector has to protect people from the private sector. The Consumer Bureau was set up for that.

Now, the chairman of the Committee on Financial Services, Mr. BACHUS, said the other day, We don't worry about the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation of the Federal Reserve. What we worry about is an agency that exists solely to protect consumers. He is also the one who said that he thought the bank regulators were there to protect the banks, but we want to have a regulator there to protect the consumers.

So I salute Elizabeth Warren. I regret that she will not be able to continue the excellent work she has done, but it will live on as a tribute to both the idea she had, the political work she did with us to get it created, and the extraordinarily good administrative work she did in setting it up. I believe Mr. Cordray and the others will do a very good job and that we will soon have proof that the public sector can, in some cases, protect citizens from private sector abuses.

RESULTS OF THE JOINT REVIEW

CFPB IDENTIFIED AND DOCUMENTED MISSION-CRITICAL ACTIVITIES AND LEGISLATIVE MANDATES

Based on CFPB planning documents and interviews of agency officials, we found that CFPB identified and documented implementation activities critical to standing up the agency's functions and necessary to address certain Dodd-Frank Act requirements. In addition to activities necessary to establish the primary mission areas identified by the Dodd-Frank Act, such as supervision and enforcement, CFPB designed its organizational structure to account for other mandated functional units as well, including offices for financial education, fair lending, and service member affairs, among others. Moreover, CFPB identified the activities necessary to complete the transfer of employees and data from the transferring agencies in a timely manner. CFPB identified in its plans the need to establish a pay and classification system, information security processes, and financial management capabilities—areas required by the Dodd-Frank Act.

In addition, CFPB prepared documentation addressing critical activities vital to establishing a new agency. For example, CFPB's plans identified core business activities—such as securing office space, establishing procurement capabilities, building payroll and benefits functions, and designing an information technology infrastructure, among others.

CFPB DEVELOPED AND IS IMPLEMENTING
APPROPRIATE PLANS

We found that CFPB developed and is implementing appropriate plans that support ongoing operations as well as the transfer of employees and functions that will occur on July 21, 2011. CFPB planned for mission-critical standup activities and certain Dodd-Frank Act requirements. In July 2010, Treasury officials created a document that, according to a CFPB official, served as a roadmap for implementation. Overall, CFPB's approach was to create detailed planning documents at the division level to provide input for the agency-wide strategic plan. Most CFPB divisions maintained a draft strategic plan, organizational chart, and "dashboards" that tracked implementation progress and potential risks. The division-level strategic plans generally included division-level missions, goals, deliverables, and coordination activities. We also noted that these plans included multiple phases that span beyond the designated transfer date.

CFPB also created several agency-wide documents that identified and tracked priorities and milestones for implementation. For example, one priority for CFPB was the transfer of employees from other agencies. To implement this priority, CFPB maintained a detailed recruitment schedule, developed coordination agreements with other agencies, and allocated resources from the various divisions to timely complete the employee transfer process.

In reviewing the agency's planning documents and discussing the standup status with CFPB officials, we found that the agency has completed elements of its implementation plans and is making progress on others, including its overall strategic plan. Nevertheless, CFPB's operational success will depend, in part, on its ability to effectively execute its plans.

LIBERIA CELEBRATES ITS 164TH
INDEPENDENCE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PAULSEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Liberian people on 164 years of independence.

Liberia, which translates to "land of the free," shares a unique history with the United States. Founded by African Americans and emancipated slaves in the early 1820s, this small nation of close to 3.8 million people is striving to build a lasting democracy—an incredible feat in such a war-torn region.

Mr. Speaker, more than 25,000 Liberian Americans call Minnesota home, and I am proud to call them my neighbors, friends and colleagues. Liberian Americans in our communities are entrepreneurs, small business people, teachers, lawyers, and nurses. They contribute to the very fabric of our Nation and to who we are as a people.

So let us today recognize the Liberian people and the long road they have traveled as a nation, and let us always remember the bond between the United States and the Republic of Liberia.

FAMINE IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, today we are witnessing a tragic humanitarian crisis in Somalia and the Horn of Africa, which is currently experiencing its worst drought in over 60 years. According to USAID, crops have failed; livestock has died, and prices in the local markets are too high for most people to buy what they need to feed their families.

On July 20, 2011, the United Nations announced that famine exists in two regions of Somalia. This crisis is affecting over 11 million people throughout the region, and USAID estimates that over 3.2 million people are in life-threatening situations and are in dire need of food, water and medical attention. Additionally, over 80 percent of those fleeing Somalia are believed to be women and children.

At Kenyan and Ethiopian refugee camps, Somali children under the age of 5 are dying at an alarming rate. I visited a camp in Kenya 2 years ago, the Dadaab camp, where many of the refugees from Somalia are going. There are five times as many people in that camp as the camp can handle. It was overcrowded 2 years ago, and with the drought, it is just becoming almost impossible to sustain life.

An alarming 60 percent of the people at risk are still in al-Shabaab-held territory. Al-Shabaab is supported by al Qaeda. They initially said there was no drought—a denial. Yet, in the part of the country of which they are in charge, the drought is very serious, especially in southern Sudan. Then they did agree that the drought was occurring and said they would allow humanitarian organizations to go to that area to distribute food and medicine. However, just last week, they changed their position again.

As we saw in the nineties with Aidid and Ali Mahdi in the original drought during which the United States became involved in Somalia, we cannot have the political warlords and that situation happen again. The World Food Programme and the United Nations are desperately trying to get the food, water and medical assistance into that area, and we are going to continue to ask the al-Shabaab people to allow the food to come in.

During a similar drought in Ethiopia during the early eighties, the international community was slow to respond, resulting in more than 1 million deaths. Then world leaders said, Never again. Now we are facing a worsening humanitarian disaster that threatens to take even more lives. We must act and support those in need.

I have to commend USAID and the work that they're doing. Yesterday, at a hearing we had on this situation, Ms. Cromer, from the USAID, talked about the fact that they had an early warning system and that they had pre-positioned food, which shows that planning has resulted in less loss of life than there would have been had it not been pre-positioned, but we still have a serious problem.

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Last week I introduced H. Res. 361, calling attention to this crisis, and we have already over 50 cosponsors.

Indeed, Congress is taking notice. My colleagues, JIM MCGOVERN, JO ANN EMERSON, members of the Hunger Caucus, along with myself and BARBARA LEE and MAXINE WATERS and GWEN MOORE and others have been very vocal on this issue. Ms. McCOLLUM also has added her voice, from Minnesota.

The crisis is worsening, though. The Famine Early Warning Systems Network believes that within the next 1 or 2 months, the famine will spread throughout all of southern Somalia. As the situation has grown more dire, over 600,000 Somalis have fled to neighboring countries, some walking hundreds of miles to refugee camps. The roads to these camps in northern Kenya and eastern Ethiopia have been described by The Washington Post just yesterday and others as "roads of death." Thousands of women, children, and elderly are left on the side of the road weak from malnutrition, unable to continue. They are resting on those who have already died.

So I ask all of you to respond to this very serious situation.

BALANCED BUDGET
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, March 2, 1995, was a pivotal day in the history of our country. On that day, the United States Senate failed by one vote to send a balanced budget amendment to the States for ratification. The amendment had passed the House by the required two-thirds majority previously, and the Senate vote was the last legislative hurdle before ratification by the States.

If that amendment had passed, then we would not be dealing with the fiscal crisis we now face. If that amendment had passed, then balancing the budget would have been the norm rather than the exception over the past decade and we would have nothing like the annual deficits and skyrocketing debt that we must address today.

The good news is that, like 1995, this Congress is again standing at a crossroads at this very moment. The decisions we make this week could steer the direction of the country for many years to come. We have an opportunity now to take action to ensure that our children will face a much brighter fiscal picture. We must not allow ourselves to miss this opportunity.

And while, yes, we definitely need to deal with the debt limit squarely in front of us and take the opportunity to make significant cuts in government spending, we also must have a long-term solution to this problem. And that long-term solution is a balanced